

Marriage and Divorce: A Tough Subject

Marriage in the Jewish Culture

Conservatives and liberals

The issue: Deuteronomy 24:1 says, “When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency [literally being naked, exposed, or uncovered] in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house...” The debate was around what constitutes “indecency.”

Shammai school – you can divorce for adultery

Hillel school – you can divorce for any ‘indecency’ you find

How you got a divorce

Issued by the husband, not a judge

Divorce certificate wording: “You are free to marry any man.”

Marriage According to Jesus (and the Bible)

Not liberal or conservative

Takes it back to creation

Male and female

Permanent – “WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER, LET NOT MAN SEPARATE”

We forgive each other because Christ forgives us

We submit to one another because Christ submitted himself to us

Our commitment is permanent because his love for us is permanent

Historical Point: this is a strong reason why the Christian church grew

Then why did God ever allow divorce?

Hardness of heart and a fallen world

A weird case: Levirate marriage (Deut. 25:5-10)

The exception clause:

Mt. 19:9 “And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.”

Desertion:

1 Corinthians 7:12-15... “when one spouse leaves the other, they demonstrate themselves to be an unbeliever and thus the remaining spouse is not bound to the marriage.” – RC Sproul

The great reformers Luther, Calvin, Bucer, Melancton, and Zwingli all allowed divorce and remarriage in the case of desertion.

Strive for the Ideal!

Word to singles – make the best choice you can by walking with Jesus closely

Questions for Personal Study

1. It is recommended that you do your own homework on divorce and remarriage.
2. What are your convictions on divorce and remarriage? Where do they come from, biblically?
3. What did Jesus’ questioners get wrong?
4. How should a Christian marriage show the world who God is?